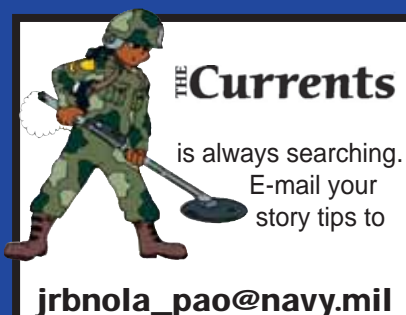




## Women Get Fit at FFSC Expo Page 10



## Louisiana Guard Partners With Belize Safety Team Page 11



# THE Currents™

Vol. 21 No. 9

Serving the New Orleans Regional Military/DoD Communities

September 2010

## New Marine Aircraft On Deck

By Mass Communication  
Specialist 2nd Class  
Jordan J. Miller  
The Currents' Staff

Marine Transport Squadron (VMR) Belle Chasse at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB) New Orleans has new aircraft in its hangar. The first UC-12W Huron arrived August 10.

The Marine Corps purchased six UC-12W Hurons from Hawker Beechcraft Corporation and two of them have been assigned to VMR Belle Chasse. VMR Belle Chasse is the first Marine Corps unit to receive these new aircraft.

"I am excited to get the new aircraft, because it will allow us to provide increased support to the war fighter, that individual Marine or Sailor who is forward deployed in harm's way," said Lt. Col. Tom Ringo, VMR Belle Chasse commanding officer. "We are working hard to get this aircraft deployed to Afghanistan as soon as possible in order to do just that."

The UC-12W Huron is a modified



A new UC-12W Huron arrives at the flight line of NAS JRB New Orleans. The Marine Transport Squadron (VMR) of NAS JRB recently received the first two of six, UC-12W's. The "Whiskey" model replaces the older UC-12Bs that the Marine pilots have been flying for two decades.

Photo by MC2 Jordan Miller

version of the Beechcraft King Air 350 turboprop airplane and it replaces the UC-12B model.

Like the aircraft it replaces it will be used for the time sensitive movement of personnel and cargo. The new aircraft also increases operational flexibility through its enhanced

capabilities in terms of range, payload, short field capability and aircraft survivability according to Ringo.

Being the first to receive the aircraft, VMR Belle Chasse will be the training site for other commands that will receive UC-12W Hurons in the

future. According to Ringo aircrews will come to VMR Belle Chasse to complete initial qualification flight training from resident instructor pilots.

VMR Belle Chasse also operates the UC-12B Huron and UC-35C Citation.

## NSA's Gateway Inn and Suites Earns Top Honors

By Mass Communication  
Specialist 2nd Class  
Jordan J. Miller  
The Currents' Staff

The Navy Gateway Inn and Suites (NGIS) at Naval Station Activity (NSA) New Orleans recently earns a five-star accreditation and the Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt award.

Through mandatory inspections NGIS operations are graded on financial management, maintenance, housekeeping, cleanliness, and front desk operation. The results can earn NGIS a three, four or five-star rating. The Adm. Zumwalt award is only awarded to those attaining the five-star accreditation.

The five-star rating distinguishes the business as the first NGIS at a base included on a Base Realignment and Closure Commission's (BRAC) closure list to achieve the coveted rating.

"I'm ecstatic," said Kisha Jackson, NGIS site manager at NSA. "Everyone wanted to close on a high note and we've accomplished that."

Earning the five-star rating is

alone, a commendable achievement, but the twist to the story is the inspection was not even scheduled to occur according to Jackson. They had begun preparing for review since last fiscal year, but were later notified that an inspection was not going to be conducted because of NSA New Orleans' BRAC status.

"Inspectors stayed here prior to inspecting Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB) New Orleans and of course we didn't know they were here," said Jackson. "The inspectors came under bogus names."

"From my understanding the inspectors talked with the NGIS regional team from the Commander, Navy Installations Command, asking that an inspection be done. The team here was very impressed by what they saw during their stay," said Jackson. "They couldn't find anything wrong and wanted everyone else to know it." Jackson said that the NGIS will be closing around this time next year.

"Usually you'll go to a NGIS at a designated BRAC base and you'll have cobwebs, or the carpet and furnishings aren't main-



The staff of Navy Gateway Inn and Suites (NGIS) of Naval Station Activity (NSA) New Orleans pose with their certificate awarded for five-star accreditation. NGIS recently received a five-star accreditation making them the first NGIS at a base included on a Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) closure list to achieve the coveted rating.

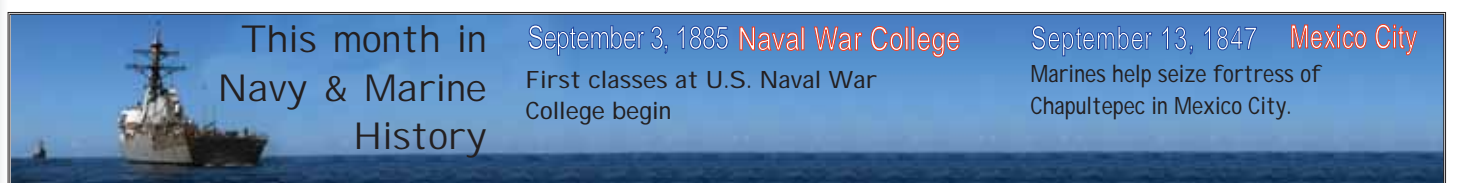
Photo by MC2 Jordan Miller

tained," said Jackson. "With a base that's closing you have people who are going to lose their jobs. To see employees still motivated and having drive even with that knowledge, that's a big thing."

Hurricane Katrina did not exclude NGIS from its devastating path in 2005 and NGIS' ability to

recover testifies again to the staff's achievement.

"Mold was a huge issue, at least 80% of our spaces had mold," said Jackson. "After Hurricane Katrina it was questioned whether or not to reopen. That's how bad we were and how hard we were hit. We came from possibly closing to getting a five-star rating."



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Navy & Marine  
History

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By Capt. Brian Harrison,  
NSA Commanding Officer

## Greetings Navy New Orleans!

I want to congratulate the staff and management of Naval Support Activity's Navy Gateway Inn and Suites. This team recently earned five-star accreditation – the Navy's highest rating, and the Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt award. Adm. Zumwalt award winners are recognized as the ultimate in Department of Defense lodging operations, and *never* before has a Base Realignment and Closure and Commission-listed lodging facility earned this distinguished recognition.

BRAC developments progress, as the Federal City developer recently purchased all furnishings from the former Navy Lodge - "lock, stock and barrel." The developer intends to open a Federal City lodge after the first of the year.

Within a few weeks demolition work is scheduled to start on the site for the four-level parking garage on the block where the NSA auto hobby shop recently vacated. This structure is being built to support the new 411,000 square-foot Marine Forces Reserve facility, by the same contractors, Woodward Design Build.

Recently, there have been questions (and rumors) regarding the future of



housing at NSA once the Federal City opens. The most inaccurate rumor is when NSA closes housing will also close. This is entirely false!

Patrician Military Management will continue to manage housing, as they have since 2001. This partnership will continue until 2052. Also, housing eligibility will not change. It will still be open only to active-duty, retirees, reservists and Department of Defense civilians. Patrician Management has also assured me that housing will be gated with controlled access prior to the closure of NSA's main gate. Truly, there are few if any changes anticipated in the operation, maintenance or structure of housing at NSA once the Federal City opens. If you have any questions or concerns not addressed here, please call Patrician Management at 866-677-0532.

In closing, we are at the pinnacle of hurricane season. We have been lucky, and we all hope this trend continues – yet, preparation is the best protection against the dangers of a hurricane. ... Review your hurricane plans, keep informed and be ready to act if a warning is issued.



*Patrician Military Housing would like to welcome all of the students back to school for the Fall 2010 year. We are sad to see this great summer coming to a close but are also excited to start the new academic year. We look forward to success in the classroom as well as success in athletics for our surrounding schools!*

*A quote from American Novelist E.W. Howe:*

*If there were no schools to take the children away from home part of the time, the insane asylums would be filled with mothers. ~Edgar W. Howe*

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## THE Currents

Vol. 21 No. 9

September 2010

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The next issue of The Currents will be published on Friday, October 1, 2010. Questions concerning content for publication are heartily encouraged and must be received at the Public Affairs Office, Naval Air Station, Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB), 400 Russell Ave., New Orleans, LA, 70143-5012, phone (504) 678-3260, by close of business on Friday, September 17, 2010.

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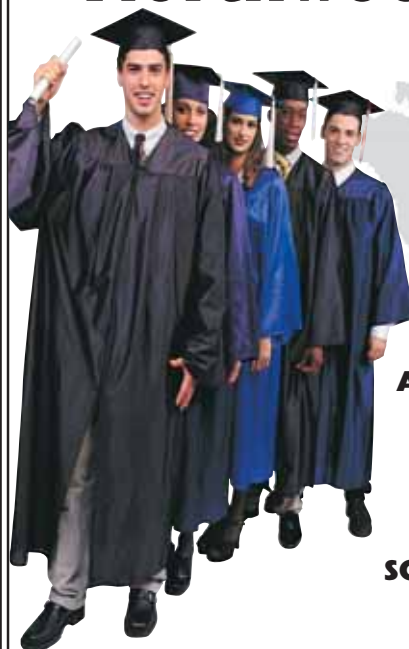
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# Spouse Jobs Program to Relaunch in October

By Elaine Wilson  
American Forces Press Service

The Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts program will resume Oct. 25, but with some significant changes to the popular spouse employment program, a defense official announced today.

Changes include a reduction in the amount of financial aid, a change in the population eligible to receive that aid — from all military spouses to spouses of junior servicemembers — and more robust counseling services.

These changes bring the program, commonly known as MyCAA, back to its original intent of equipping military spouses of junior servicemembers with portable careers, such as in real estate or health care, Clifford

Stanley, the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, said. The program was launched in November 2007 for spouses of junior servicemembers, and was expanded to all pay grades and programs of study in March 2009.

"We're trying to empower, to give spouses in particular, an opportunity to be immediately impactful as soon as they get into a community," Stanley said in an interview with the Pentagon Channel and American Forces Press Service. "We want to make sure they have opportunities to work when they get to a new duty station."

Officials temporarily halted the program Feb. 16, pending a top-to-bottom review, after an enrollment surge overwhelmed the system and caused the program to nearly reach its budget threshold. In March, with the

review still under way, officials resumed the program for the more than 136,000 spouses who already had established an account.

The aim is to sustain the program, he said. "We don't want to start it and stop it. This is something we want to continue because it's important to take care of our families and our spouses."

Under the new parameters, spouses of junior servicemembers can apply for a maximum financial benefit of \$4,000 for up to three years from the start date of the first class, with a \$2,000 annual cap, Stanley explained. Spouses pursuing licenses or certifications requiring an up-front fee of greater than \$2,000 may apply for a waiver of the annual cap up to the maximum benefit of \$4,000, he added.

Financial aid will be limited to

spouses of active-duty servicemembers in pay grades E-1 to E-5, W1 to W-2 and O-1 to O-2, Stanley said, as well as the spouses of activated Guard and Reserve members within those ranks. Spouses of Guard and Reserve members must be able to start and complete their courses while their sponsor is on Title 10 orders, he added.

Those spouses eligible to receive aid can use the money to fund associate's degrees, licenses and certification programs, not higher degrees. The program wasn't intended to support bachelor's and master's degrees, Stanley said. However, he added, spouses pursuing higher degrees can explore a plethora of other education opportunities — such as scholarships, federal grants and the G.I. Bill — with help from Military OneSource con-

sultants.

Spouses currently enrolled in the program can continue their participation through Oct. 21, when MyCAA will ramp down and prepare for the Oct. 25 launch. As of Oct. 25, those spouses who fall within the eligible pay grades can continue their program participation. Spouses who no longer are eligible for financial aid still can participate by accessing career and education counseling services, Stanley said.

To ensure the vitality of the program, Military OneSource counselors will encourage spouses to explore other funding resources, including federal benefits. And staffing levels have been increased to handle the anticipated call volume and enable more one-on-one counseling with spouses, Stanley said. Officials also will monitor the program much closer now to ensure they can maintain it, he added.

Spouses can learn more about MyCAA on Military OneSource at 1-800-342-9647 or <http://www.military-onesource.com>.

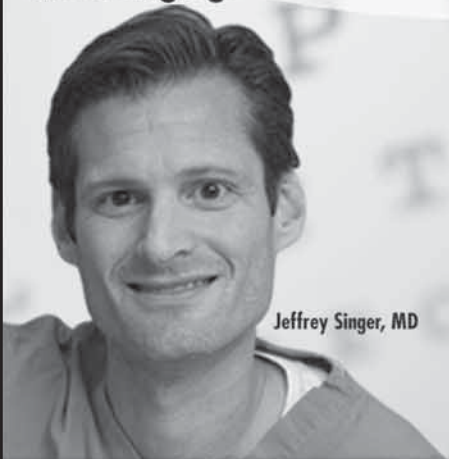
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Unofficially referred to as Spouse Tuition Assistance, the Department of Defense recently expanded Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts (MyCAA) program can provide up to \$6,000 of financial assistance for military spouses.



### NMCRS Needs Volunteers

The Navy and Marine Corps Relief Society is looking for volunteers. Volunteer caseworkers are needed in the main office and the NMCRS Thrift Store needs and an assistant chairman and general workers.

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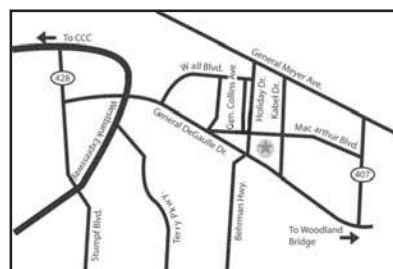


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# When The Circus Came To Town

By Chaplain (Cmdr.) Kenneth Rodes  
NAS JRB Base Chaplain

Not too long ago the Ringling Brothers B&B Circus came to New Orleans. As I read about it I was reminded of a story Dan Clark told about his father. It is a wonderful story of almsgiving done for the right motive, to help someone without calling attention to yourself. It involved giving up an enjoyable evening for Dan and his dad but by doing so, it brought Dan and his dad great joy. It is entitled "The Circus."

Once when I was a teenager, my father and I were standing in line to buy tickets for the circus. Finally, there was only one family between us and the ticket counter. This family made a big impression on me. There were eight children, all probably under the age of 12. You could tell they didn't have a lot of money.

Their clothes were not expensive, but they were clean. The children were well-behaved, all of them standing in line, two-by-two behind their parents, holding hands. They were excitedly jabbering about the clowns, elephants and other acts they would see that night. One could sense they had never been to the circus before. It promised to be a highlight of their young lives. The father and mother were at the head of the pack standing as proud as could be. The mother was holding her husband's hand, looking up at him as if to say, "You're my knight in shining armor." He was smiling and basking in pride, looking at her as if to reply, "You got that right."

The ticket lady asked the father how many tickets he wanted. He proudly responded, "Please let me buy eight children's tickets and two adult tickets so I can take my family

to the circus." The ticket lady quoted the price. The man's wife let go of his hand, her head dropped, the man's lip began to quiver. The father leaned a little closer and asked, "How much did you say?" The ticket lady again quoted the price. The man didn't have enough money. How was he supposed to turn and tell his eight kids that he didn't have enough money to take them to the circus?

Seeing what was going on, my dad put his hand into his pocket, pulled out a \$20 bill and dropped it on the ground. (We were not wealthy in any sense of the word!) My father reached down, picked up the bill, tapped the man on the shoulder and said, "Excuse me, sir, this fell out of your pocket." The man knew what was going on. He wasn't begging for a handout but certainly appreciated the help in a desperate, heartbreaking, embar-

assing situation. He looked straight into my dad's eyes, took my dad's hand in both of his, squeezed tightly onto the \$20 bill, and with his lip quivering and a tear streaming down his cheek, he replied, "Thank you, thank you, sir. This really means a lot to me and my family."

My father and I went back to our car and drove home. We didn't go to the circus that night, but we certainly didn't go without.

Hopefully this story will remind and inspire us to be sensitive to the needs of others and lend a helping hand without calling attention to ourselves as Dan's father did when he helped that family. Moreover, may it be a practice which is not limited to a particular time but become a regular aspect of our lives. In that way we will come to know true joy and foster our spiritual growth.

(Dan Clark is an internationally



Chaplain (Cmdr.) Kenneth Rodes

recognized professional speaker, New York Times best-selling author, songwriter/recording artist and chief executive officer of Clark Success Systems.)

## Louisiana Guard, Belize Defence Force Safety Team Partner Up

By Capt. Beverly G. Couto  
Louisiana National Guard

The Louisiana Air National Guard's 159th Fighter Wing partnered with a Belize Defence Force safety team at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans this summer to reinforce the importance of ground safety procedures.

Louisiana has state partnerships with both Belize and Uzbekistan through the National Guard State Partnership Program, which links states with foreign countries in an effort to develop international affairs.

The 159th Fighter Wing provided the Belize Defence Force safety team with an overview of leading mishap prevention techniques and tools vital to Louisiana Air National Guard operations.

This joint training will aid the Belize Defence Force's safety team in mitigating hazards at their home station.

Chief Master Sgt. Donnie Dunn, 159th Fighter Wing ground safety manager, said the teams went over aircraft, facility, equipment and personnel ground safety procedures.

"We were able to discuss, in detail, certain aspects of safety that they had questions about," said Dunn.

The goal of the visit was to learn, from one another, new ways to prevent personnel from getting injured and to reduce property damage.

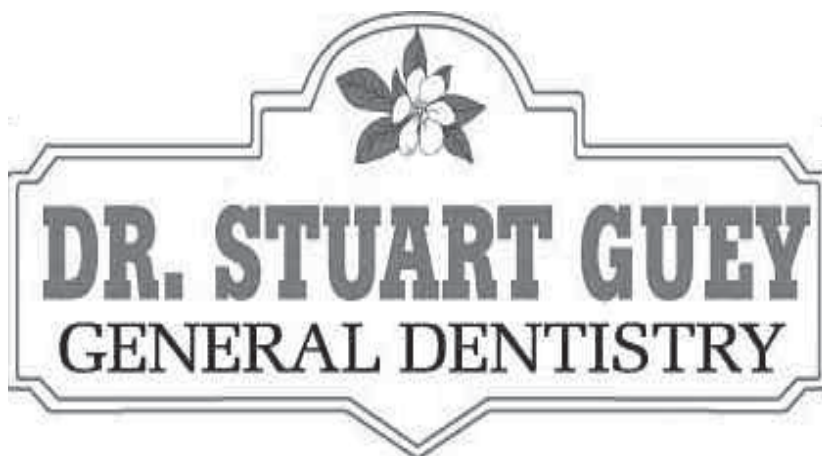
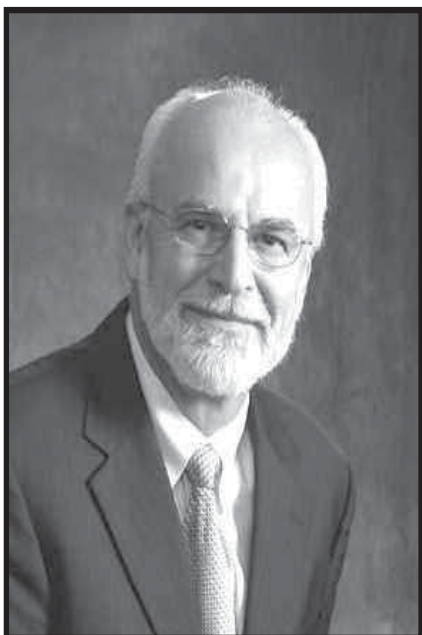
The Belize Defence Force and the Louisiana Air National Guard have different missions and needs; however, this was a great learning opportunity for both.

"It's good to see how differently things are done and to get new ideas," said 1st. Lt. Adran Ramirez, a pilot with the Belize Defence Force.

These cooperative visits reinforce the value of the State Partnership Program and help build long term relationships with other countries or regions with common interests.



Chief Master Sgt. Donnie Dunn, ground safety manager with the Louisiana National Guard's 159th Fighter Wing, describes how to inspect an augmentor nozzle on an F-15 Fighter aircraft to members of the Belize Defence Force during a State Partnership Program visit to the wing.  
U.S. Air Force Photo by Master Sgt Daniel Farrel



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# Suicide Prevention: Everyone's Responsibility

By Tammy Prine  
The Currents' Staff

In just the first quarter of 2010 the Navy lost six active-duty Sailors and three selected reservists to suicide. These tragedies affect all demographic groups across all communities.

It is important to recognize that suicide prevention is an all hands effort - educate yourself on the issue, familiarize yourself with the resources available, and share this knowledge with your family and shipmates in order to strengthen the suicide prevention network. Everyone needs to work towards removing the barriers that stop people from seeking the support available to them by improving awareness and eliminating misperceptions.

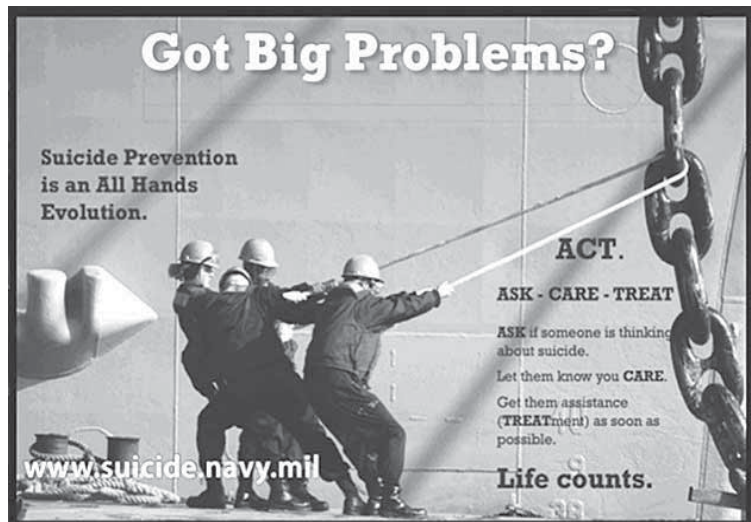
"ACT" is the Navy's core message: if you see someone who may be struggling, reach out and act.

**A** - ask the person what is bothering them, how you can help and if they are thinking of hurting themselves.

**C** - care by listening without judgment and offer hope.

**T** - treat by personally assisting the individual in getting help through their chain of command, chaplains, or medical services. Never leave someone considering suicide alone!

Transition times such as permanent change of station moves, returns from deployments, and career transitions, are



times when normal support systems may not be available and personnel may not know each other well enough to recognize a change in behavior.

In recent years almost half of all Navy suicides occurred during or shortly after a transition, making this a time when extra effort to stay connected can be critical.

Often people can recognize their own increased stress and heed the warning signs and avoid potential bad judgment. Regardless of age, education, or experience, we can all find ourselves in challenging situations that can impair our judgment.

"I HALT." Use the acronym "I HALT" to help in recognizing and correcting potential harmful situations.

**I** - Impaired with alcohol or med-

## ications

Alcohol and over the counter or prescription medications can have a negative effect on our thinking and decision making.

## H - Hungry

We do not often think about how hunger or dehydration impact our mood, but they do. Try to avoid heated discussions and major purchases when you are hungry or dehydrated.

## A - Angry

While the aggressive driver on the street may anger us, those closest to us, spouses, family, and close friends, are the ones who can really push our buttons. If you find yourself infuriated or enraged, realize it is not the time to add alcohol, firearms or vehicles to the situation. Take action to cool down so that

clearer thinking can guide your actions. Exercise can help let off steam. Another useful tool is the "dive reflex" - put cold water on your face or even grab a handful of ice. This tends to lower your heart rate for a few minutes and buy a little time for you to examine your thinking and avoid rash decisions. Anger distorts your thinking and can kill. In the past year, too many sailors lost their lives to suicide or accidents in moments of anger fueled by arguments with loved ones.

## L - Lonely

Loneliness can affect us at any time, even while in the midst of a crowd. It can catch us unaware particularly if we have experienced a loss, whether due to a death, divorce, or simply a falling out.

## T - Tired

Being tired or sleep deprived seriously impedes reaction time, concentration, mood, memory, and judgment. Like alcohol, fatigue can catch us unaware. Sleep disturbance or deficit has been associated with suicide and other unsafe acts. Leaders should not underestimate the importance of sleep in maintaining resilience.

Everyone must be on guard against the distorted thinking that "I HALT" states can cause.

It is important to understand how these factors can affect perceptions and actions. When you recognize that "I HALT" factors are in place, avoid dangerous activities, starting or ending intimate relationships, and any

irrevocable decisions. Take time to eat, hydrate, rest, and cool down; reach out to people you trust.

If your thinking is taking you in circles and you are having trouble dealing with your problem, get another opinion - a reality check - from someone you trust or call one of the support resources listed below.

For additional resources and information call or visit these sites.

Military Onesource - [www.military-onesource.com](http://www.military-onesource.com) or 800-342-9647

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org) or 800-273-8255; and Navy suicide prevention - [www.suicide.navy.mil](http://www.suicide.navy.mil).

To speak with someone local call ETCS (SW/AW) Ronald Lyons, NAS JRB command suicide prevention coordinator at 504-678-9813 or Mike Avist from the NAS JRB Fleet and Family Support Center at 504-678-7560.

## Helping a Suicidal Person

- Do be direct
- Do be willing to listen
- Do be non-judgmental
- Do get involved
- Do offer hope
- Do ACT
- Do get help
- Don't dare him or her to do it
- Don't act shocked
- Don't be sworn to secrecy

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# FFSC Provides Fitness Ideas to Women Through Expo



Liz Allen and Janese Galathe, from Manhattan Athletic Club, lead participants in Jazzercise work out at the Women's Health and Fitness Expo July 24. Jazzercise is an aerobic exercise based on jazz dance, Pilates, yoga, resistance training, and kickboxing.



Chief Logistics Specialist Margret Ries talks to a representative from the Military to Medicine program at the at the Women's Health and Fitness Expo July 24. The Military to Medicine program provides training and career paths for veterans and military spouses in the health care fields.

Photos by MC2 John P. Curtis

By Mass Communication Specialist  
2nd Class John P. Curtis  
**The Currents' Staff**

The Fleet and Family Service Center (FFSC) hosted a women's health and fitness expo recently on Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB) New Orleans.

The expo hosted several ven-

dors with information on different exercises, stress relief and nutrition.

"The purpose of this event was to promote general education as it relates to your health," said Melissa Garner, a work and family life consultant with FFSC and the Expo coordinator.

Along with information booths were exercise demonstration that drew participation from the audience.

"I liked the Tai Chi a lot, because it is a very relaxing exercise," said Manuela Ensign.

Ensign also said she enjoyed the Jazzercise because she was familiar with the steps and it was easy to follow.

Jazzercise demonstrations by Manhattan Athletic Club staff members and Tai Chi performed by King Lam's Tamashii Karate and Tai Chi Center were the more popular

exhibitions.

"Jazzercise is an aerobic exercise that gets your blood pumping and Tai Chi is more relaxing for your body and mind," said Garner.

At the information booths, guests received pamphlets and guidance about health, fitness, career fields and other exercise programs for on base, home or gym workouts.

"We wanted to encompass the

overall fitness for women, mind and body," said Garner. "So we included job opportunities, financial counseling and also have a guest physician to listen to what is on people's minds."

Ochsner Medical Center provided free blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose blood sugar checks for anyone interested and had a physician on call to answer question about medical concerns.

## Moms and Children Connect Through NAS JRB Playgroup

By Mass Communication Specialist  
2nd Class Jordan J. Miller  
**The Currents' Staff**

Twice a month moms and their children get together for activities, fun and fellowship at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans.

The "Mommy and Me" playgroup, which meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday in the base chapel, is sponsored by the U.S. Coast Guard and the Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC).

"It's another way for us, the Fleet and Family Support Center, to reach military parents with children," said Jacquelyn Rodriguez, FFSC new parent support specialist.

"The playgroup exists to break isolation for parents and for kids to build social skills. The kids get excited about hopscotch, the parachute, and play balls. It is a familiar place for

them to have fun and connect with other children," said Kelley Delaune, a licensed clinical social worker and playgroup facilitator.

Delaune conducts puppet shows, reads books and provides materials for crafts and snacks for the children. These activities are all strategically structured.

"Kids like structure," Delaune said. "They know what's going to happen."

Children are not the only ones making connections at the playgroup. The group is also for moms to connect with other moms.

"Some of us mothers from the playgroup, we're friends and we will do other activities together," said Manuela Ensign.

The playgroup is from 10 to 11:30 a.m. For more information on the playgroup call Kelli Deluca 504-253-6366 or Jacquelyn Rodriguez 504-678-2559/7569



Mothers and children participate in an activity as part of the "Mommy & Me" playgroup conducted at the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB) New Orleans' base chapel. The group meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Photo by MC2 Jordan Miller

# Army's Chief of Staff Visits Corps Surge Barrier Project

By Nick Silbert  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Gen. George Casey, U. S. Army chief of staff, toured one of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) major projects—the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal-Lake Borgne Surge Barrier, in August.

"It is an honor to have the chief of staff visit one of our projects," said Col. Robert Sinkler, commander of the Corps' Hurricane Protection Office. "I think it really demonstrates the importance of our work here in southeast Louisiana"

Casey was in New Orleans for a National Guard Bureau conference and training workshop. Earlier in the day, the general discussed his strategic vision for the future of the Army at a World Affairs Council of New Orleans luncheon.

Following this address at the World War II Museum, Casey and his wife joined Maj. Gen. Michael Walsh, commander of the Mississippi Valley Division, at the Lake Borgne Surge Barrier. The tour provided many of the USACE employees and soldiers who have contributed to the development of the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS) the unique opportunity to meet and shake hands with Casey.

The 1.8-mile long surge barrier, which stretches across the confluence of the Mississippi River-Gulf Outlet and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, will operate in tandem with the soon-to-be constructed Seabrook Floodgate Complex to provide 100-year risk reduction for some of the region's most vulnerable areas, including New Orleans East, metro New Orleans, Gentilly, the Ninth Ward and St. Bernard Parish.



Gen. George Casey, U. S. Army chief of staff, shakes hands and gives one of his military coins to Luis Ruiz, deputy for execution support for the USACE's Hurricane Protection Office.

Photo by Paul Floro

## New Horizons Airmen, Marines Spend Day at Panamanian School

By Tech. Sgt. Eric Petosky  
New Horizons Panama 2010  
Public Affairs

**METETI, Panama** – This past summer, more than a dozen Airmen and Marines from Task Force New Horizons spent a day with local children at the elementary school in Sansonsito, building rubber-band airplanes and playing games.

According to Lisbeth Acosta Corella, the school's director, the service members were a welcome addition to the day.

"When the children found out the (U.S. service members) were coming, they were very excited," she said through an interpreter. "Today, they are ecstatic - all are very happy (the service members) came."

Mrs. Corella explained that the school invited parents and visitors to the school in preparation for a Panamanian national "Children's Holiday" July 18. While school children played games and constructed the rubber-band planes, parents and teachers sold food to raise funds for activities during the upcoming holiday.

"I like model airplanes," said 7-year-old Javier Brago, a student at Sansonsito. "I've never had one before, so I think I'm going to keep it." Javier's enthusiasm was shared by Pfc. Juan Romero, a civil affairs Marine deployed from the 4th Civil Affairs Group in Washington D.C., and Tech. Sgt. Dorothy Lanthier, a personnel specialist deployed from 177th Fighter Wing in Atlantic City, N.J.

"The children seemed to like working with us to put the planes together," Lanthier said, "and just to see their



Senior Airman Cesar Morales, 820th Expeditionary Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers (RED HORSE) Squadron, helps children assemble rubber-band airplanes at the Sansonsito School. RED HORSE units are the service's equivalent of the Army's Combat Engineers and Navy Seabees.

faces when they launched the planes made my day. It makes it so much easier to be away from my family to see that we're really making a difference here."

Romero and the civil affairs Marines from the 4th CAG made the visit possible. As civil affairs specialists, the CAG Marines are the liaisons between the U.S. Military and the local population.

"Our mission in Panama is to interact with the local population, maximize the humanitarian impact of New Horizon Panama 2010," Romero said. "We visit the job sites and other schools in the area to assess different ways we can make a positive impact. These quick impact projects include things like setting up internet access, donations, and activities where U.S. service members interact with local children. Today's visit is just one of many — designed not only educate local citizens about the

New Horizons mission, but to forge relationships that go 'beyond the uniform.'"

New Horizons Panama 2010 is a U.S. Southern Command sponsored humanitarian assistance exercise designed to provide medical care and quality-of-life improvement projects for the people of Panama. In total, four schools and two medical clinics will be renovated by a force of U.S. Air Force and U.S. Army engineers. Additionally, five medical teams will deploy for two-week rotations in the towns of Chitre, Veraguas, and David to provide care in the fields of ophthalmology, ear-nose-throat surgery, and dentistry.

Since New Horizons started in the mid-1980's, Airmen and members of USSOUTHCOM have built schools and community centers, dug wells, provided medical care, and constructed clinics year after year at the request of



Pfc. Juan Romero, a civil affairs Marine deployed from the 4th Civil Affairs Group, helps children assemble rubber-band airplanes at the Sansonsito School.

Photos by Tech. Sgt. Eric Petosky

numerous countries in the spirit of cooperation and friendship.

All these missions revolve around USSOUTHCOM's ongoing commitment to theater security cooperation, and are requested by the host nations.

By sharing experiences, information, vital skills, tactics, and techniques, the United States continues to build enduring partnerships with nations in Central and South America, as well as the Caribbean.



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## Medical Researchers Find Effective Non-Surgical Therapies for Low Back Pain

*George Van Wormer, DC*

Most patients suffering with acute mild or moderate low back pain recover in a short period of time using over-the-counter medications, heat or cold packs and maintenance of most of their usual activities. Among those who have greater pain and dysfunction, many seek professional health care. Recently, the American Pain Society and the American College of Physicians commissioned an evidence-based review of the scientific literature to advise health care professionals and patients how best to manage low back pain and disability.

The results from this panel's research were published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*. The scientific review board found several treatments that demonstrated effectiveness and some that failed to show effectiveness. For patients with acute low back pain (symptoms less than 4 week duration), spinal manipulation and superficial heat were effective, but spinal-specific exercise was not. For patients with chronic low back pain (symptoms more than a 4 week duration), spinal manipulation, yoga, acupuncture, cognitive-behavioral treatment, spinal-specific exercise and massage therapy were effective, but shortwave diathermy and traction were not. For patients with sciatica (back and/or leg pain), spinal manipulation was effective, but traction was not.

This is very good news for the millions of Americans who suffer with these symptoms, especially because these treatments (under the guidance of a licensed professional) have excellent safety record. In fact, these therapies are considered safer than most prescription medications. It is interesting to note that the only therapy that demonstrated effectiveness for all patient groups (acute, chronic, sciatica) was spinal manipulation.

*Dr. George Van Wormer is a chiropractor in Harvey specializing in the non-surgical treatment of spinal conditions. Call (504) 362-3000 for more information.*

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## NAS JRB JAG Honored By Society of American Indian Government Employees

By Mass Communication Specialist  
2nd Class John P. Curtis  
**The Currents' Staff**

Lt. Cmdr. Christopher Mora was awarded the Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) Outstanding Achievement Award June 15 during SAIGE's 7th annual training conference in Uncasville, Conn.

Mora is a citizen of the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana and is also the officer in charge of the Navy's Region Legal Service Office Southeast, New Orleans Branch Office, which provides legal counsel for Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB) New Orleans and Naval Support Activity (NSA) New Orleans.

"SAIGE is the first and only organization that represents American Indians and Alaskan Natives federal employees," said Mora.

He received the award for contributions to not only the Navy, but his tribe as well.

"It is a great honor to receive this award," said Mora. "I was pleasantly surprised, given that SAIGE only gives this award to two Navy personnel each year."

During the past 11 years he has provided pro-bono legal services and community service for the Chitimacha Tribe.

From 2009 to 2010, Mora guided his tribe in a review of its tribal code which includes developing an American Bar Association (ABA) based code of judicial conduct for judges and rules of professional conduct for lawyers. He also drafted rules of evidence, civil procedure, criminal procedure, a child welfare code, family law code, estate planning and a probate code.

Another highlighted accomplishment of Mora was creating the first alternative dispute resolution system based on the customs and traditions of the Chitimacha Tribe, known as the Peacemaker Court.

"I was well prepared to provide rule of law advice to the Chitimacha Tribe as this is an area in which I have specialized training," he said.

Mora was trained in Federal Indian Law while studying at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, as a graduate student at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and during

highly specialized training in the concept of Native American nation building taught by the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development (HPAIED).

Mora is also responsible for the researching of tribal history and genealogy and design of the tribe's national flag and seals used for the police departments and scholarships. He has served as a substitute teacher for the tribal school's physical education classes and has drafted wills and powers of attorney for tribal members.

The SAIGE conference was attended by more than 500 military members and government employees.

During the conference several military members received awards.

Danny Garceau, SAIGE chairman, shared his thoughts on the significance of the awards and the contributions made by the award recipients.

"I feel so much pride in what the Department of Defense does in helping to honor our native brothers and sisters in uniform and those who serve in the Depart-



Lt. Cmdr. Christopher receives the Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) Outstanding Achievement Award from Veronica Vasquez, board member at large for the society. Mora was one of the two Sailors presented with the award at the SAIGE's 7th annual training conference in Uncasville, Conn., this summer.

*Courtesy photo*

ment of Defense," said Garceau. "These individuals are most deserving, and I think each and every one of them will tell you

that they're not just receiving these awards for themselves, but for their brothers and sisters they serve with too."

### Belle Chasse Academy Meetings Notices

Board of Directors

#### September Meeting -

6 September 2010 • 7 p.m. at BCA

#### October Meeting -

4 October 2010 • 7 p.m. at BCA

Please check the BCA web site for Board of Directors Committees Meetings and PTO Meeting



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## Time running out for troops, veterans to claim 'stop loss' pay

By Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael J. Carden  
**American Forces Press Service**

WASHINGTON — Eligible servicemembers and veterans have less than two months to apply for Retroactive "Stop Loss" Special Pay.

The special pay was approved by Congress as part of the 2009 War Supplemental Appropriations Act. Servicemembers and veterans who involuntarily served or were on "Stop Loss" from Sept. 11, 2001 to Sept. 30, 2009, are entitled to \$500 for each month served past their contracted end-of-service, resignation or retirement date.

"This additional money, this benefit, was granted by Congress to recognize that continued service," Lernes "Bear" Hebert, acting director of the Defense Department's Officer and Enlisted Personnel Management office, said.

The Pentagon announced the program Oct. 21, 2009. Those eligible must apply by Oct. 21, 2010, to receive compensation. And, survivors of servicemembers who were under 'Stop Loss' orders are entitled to the benefit.

The Defense Department wants to ensure everyone eligible for the special retroactive pay is compensated, Hebert said.

"It's time for people to [apply] and get their application in. Notify anyone you've served with, even if they have separated, even family members of separated folks to apply."

Each service has its own criteria and specific outreach and application process. Members and veterans who qualify, or think they are eligible for the special pay must contact their individual services for eligibility requirements.

So far \$111 million has been paid out to 25,000 troops and veterans affected by 'Stop Loss,' Hebert said. "The average payout is \$3,000 to \$4,000 per claim."

The Pentagon has about \$423 million left in the program's fund.

"Congress authorized a fairly generous number, so we're not concerned about the money running out," Hebert said. "We are concerned about individuals getting their applications in."

Information about the program, procedures and points of contact for each individual service can be found at [www.defense.gov/stoploss](http://www.defense.gov/stoploss).

The Pentagon and individual services have been reaching out to qualified members, veterans and beneficiaries through direct mailings, veteran services organization, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the media. Those efforts will be ongoing through Oct. 21, 2010, as there is much money left to be claimed, Hebert said.

"The services have been doing tremendous outreach trying to get to all the eligibles," he said.

Hebert said he expects a surge of claims as the deadline nears. He urges those who are eligible for the retroactive pay to take advantage of it now.

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# Enlisted Warfare Qualifications: A Mandatory Requirement

By Chief Mass Communication Specialist  
(SW/AW) Sonya Ansarov  
**Office of the Master Chief  
Petty Officer of the Navy**

WASHINGTON (NNS) — Initial enlisted warfare qualifications are now mandatory for all Sailors.

The Navy recently announced the release of Office of the Chief of Naval Operations Instruction (OPNAVINST) 1414.9, Navy Enlisted Warfare Qualification Programs Instruction, which issues the basic overarching requirements for the qualification and designation of all enlisted warfare programs.

The arduous and often unforgiving environment we operate in as a Navy and Sailor dictates the need for all personnel to have a basic understanding and oper-

ating knowledge of the platform or command to which they are assigned.

Warfare programs are essential in ensuring our Sailors understand and are able to effectively engage a casualty, operate equipment or platforms safely and ensure backup as needed. Warfare qualifications are about ship, shipmate and self, and ensure the safety and safe operation of each command and platform on a daily basis.

"It's a standard every Sailor must achieve. The warfare device itself is a symbol that the Sailors who are wearing it have a basic level of knowledge to ensure they are capable of fighting the ship, saving a shipmate and ensuring the safety of themselves at all times," said Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON), Rick D. West. "Having every Sailor at or working to-

ward that level will only strengthen the war-fighting ability of that command and the Navy."

According to the instruction, qualification and/or re-qualification is mandatory for all enlisted Sailors assigned to designated warfare qualifying commands.

Warfare sponsors (Type Commanders) will establish specific qualification and re-qualifying timelines however, the maximum allowable time for initial qualification of all enlisted Sailors assigned to designated warfare qualifying commands will not exceed 30 months. Timelines for warfare qualifications are set by the Type Commander's instructions and each TYCOM will have oversight of their programs.

According to West, some of the biggest questions he hears from Sailors are:

- What happens if a Sailor

doesn't qualify in time?

Failure to qualify in the specific warfare program within the prescribed time requirements shall immediately result in a special performance evaluation that removes promotion recommendation, but the promotion recommendation may be restored with a special performance evaluation when qualification is achieved.

- Will a Sailor be penalized if their command doesn't offer the opportunity for warfare qualification?

Sailors without the opportunity to qualify in a warfare specialty will not be penalized. However Sailors should look for follow-on opportunities to obtain a warfare device when able.

- Will having mandatory qualifications water down the existing programs?

Quite the contrary; by mandating warfare qualifications for all

enlisted personnel, it will significantly "raise the bar" across the command regarding level of knowledge of the command and the systems our Sailors operate. It is incumbent on those that wear the warfare pin of the command to ensure the integrity and strength of the existing programs.

- How will Sailors stand-out amongst peers if everyone is required to have a warfare pin? According to West, Sailors stand out every day. Performance and the Sailor's overall command support should be the biggest factors to "break out" individuals.

"I often highlight efficient manning and future platforms such as LCS as examples of the need to ensuring our Sailors have a good, basic understanding of the systems and fighting capabilities of the command to which they are assigned," said West.

## Programs, Services Available for Special-Needs Dependent

By Thomas A. Martin

Many active-duty and retired (with pay) servicemembers that have a special-needs dependent may not be aware of some of the special programs available to them. One of these is the Incapacitated Dependent Program.

To be able to benefit from the program the special-needs dependent must be incapable of self support because of a mental or physical incapacity that existed before their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday or 23<sup>rd</sup>

birthday if enrolled as a full-time student in an accredited institution of higher learning. The special-needs dependent must be unmarried and incapable of self support and the military sponsor provides at least 50 percent of the dependent's financial support.

At least six months prior to the special-needs dependent's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, active-duty personnel should talk to their command's personnel office for eligibility determination. Retired members can get in touch with the Navy Personnel Center's ID card department by phone at 1-866-827-5672

or through their website: <http://www.npc.navy.mil/CommandSupport/PayPersSupport/IDCards/Benefits.htm>.

Ensuring that the eligible special-needs dependent is enrolled in this program is of the utmost importance. This enrollment ensures continued DEERS eligibility for a uniformed services identification card and Tricare coverage. Otherwise, all military dependent benefits, including Tricare, expire at age 21.

Other considerations for those with a special-needs dependent include the Special Needs Trust

(SNT), Medicaid Home & Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver and the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP).

An SNT is designed to hold assets in trust for a disabled dependent and simultaneously protect that dependent's eligibility for public assistance programs such as Supplemental Security income (SSI) and Medicaid. Without an SNT, leaving the disabled dependent an inheritance of \$2000 or more could possibly cause them to lose government benefits.

The HCBS waiver program will provide services in the home and

community for persons who would otherwise require institutional care. Application may be made as early as three years of age, with qualifying diagnosis.

Military members with a special-needs dependent and preparing for retirement should thoroughly review all options under the SBP before declining coverage. More information on the SPB can be found at <http://www.dfas.mil/rapay/annuities/sbp/SBPGuideBook.pdf>.

(Martin is a retired U.S. Navy senior chief aviation machinist's mate)

## VFA-204 Under New Command

Cmdr. Douglas Cochran is the new commanding officer of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 204 at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans.

Cmdr. Paul Laube, who had been commander of the F/A-18A+ Hornet squadron since March 2009, turned over command of the squadron to Cochran in late July.

Cochran, a native of Jefferson City, Tenn., earned his Navy wings in 1991. In 1995 Cochran attended the Navy Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN) with follow-on orders to Strike Fighter Weapons School, Atlantic, where he served as a strike fighter tactics instructor.

His active-duty assignments included VFA-106, VFA-192, VFA-87 and VFA-203.

After leaving active duty in 2001 he became a Navy reservist with assignments at VFA-203, Fighter Squadron Composite (VFC) 12 and Naval Support Activity Millington, Tenn.

In his civilian capacity Commander Cochran is a commercial airline pilot with. He has accumulated more than 3500 flight hours in multiple Navy aircraft and logged 415 carrier landings.

Strike Fighter Squadron 204, The River Rattlers, was originally commissioned in 1970 as Attack Squadron 204 at Naval Air Station Millington, Tenn., and flew A-4C and A-4E Skyhawks and moved to NAS JRB New Orleans in 1978. The squadron pilots have been flying the F/A-18A+ Hornet since 1991.



During its 40 years of service the squadron has earned multiple Chief of Naval Operations safety awards and three F. Trubee Davison awards for the "Best Tailhook Squadron in the Naval Reserves. In 2009 VFA-204 completed its 29<sup>th</sup> year and 95,363 flight hours Class "A" mishap free while flying 2016 sorties and 2915 flight hours.



Lt. Col. Thomas Ringo, right, took command of the newly established Marine Transport Squadron (VMR) during an assumption of command ceremony in their hangar July 30. The command was formerly assigned as a detachment of Marine Aircraft Group (MAG) 49. The squadron currently operates the UC-35C Citation, UC-12W and UC-12B Huron.  
*Photo by MC2 John P. Curtis*



## FLEET RESERVE ASSOCIATION

Do you know that the Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) is **NOT JUST FOR RESERVES AND RETIREES**? This organization is also for all active-duty members of the U. S. Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard personnel! The FRA is the leading voice of enlisted Sea Service personnel on Capitol Hill and has been since 1924. A congressionally chartered, non-profit organization that represents the interests of the Sea Service community before the U. S. Congress, the Association's membership is comprised of current and former enlisted members of the U. S. Navy, Marines and Coast Guard. FRA was chartered as the Fleet Reserve Association in 1924 and, after more than 80 years, FRA remains dedicated to its primary mission of serving the interests of current and former enlisted the U. S. Navy, Marines and Coast Guard personnel. FRA presents a strong, unified voice to ensure that enlisted issues are heard by Congress and urges support for legislation to increase pay and benefits.

The local FRA Branch 162 is located at  
**703 Kepler Avenue, Gretna, LA 70053.**

Open Tuesday through Saturday at 1300-until.

**Our local branch has pool and dart teams, barbeques, crawfish boils, fish fries, karaoke, bunko, casino nights, and much more.**

*Branch 162 actively donates to local causes.*

**Upcoming events include:**

**August** – Customer Appreciation Night

**September** – Fall Follies party

**October** – Halloween party

**November** – Poker Run for Wounded Warriors

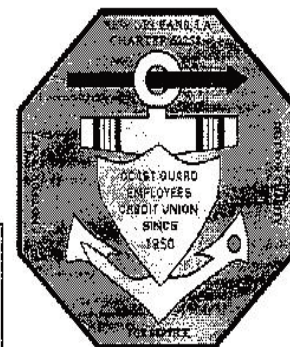
**December** – Christmas party

For more information or to join the FRA Branch 162 call

**504-366-4724**

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## September MWR Events at NAS JRB

**Sept. 9** – MWR Lunchtime Saints super tailgate party – behind Riverboat Lanes diner from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Jambalaya, hot dogs, hamburgers, hot sausage, beverages and more.

**Sept. 11** – Free youth soccer clinic – 9 to 11 a.m. For youth ages 5 to 17 (18 if still in school). Registration is required and proof of age required at time of registration. Call 504-678-3310 for more information.

**Sept. 14 and 15** – Vet Clinic – Appointment required for all visits. Call 504-678-7519 for appointment.

**Sept. 18** – NOLAPALOOZA Music Fest – Hangar 263 – Noon until 8:30 pm. Bring your chairs or blankets. Local food vendors, beverages and lots of kids entertainment. No outside food or beverage allowed. Musical guests include: Jus Fa nah playing from

1:30 to 2:30 p.m., Navy Brass Band 3 to 4 p.m. Rocking Dopsie 4:30 to 5:30, Eli Young Band 7 to 8 and fireworks closing out the event at 8:15. Call 504-678-3231 for more information.

**Rock "N" Bowl** – Every Friday night from 6 until 10 p.m. is rock "n" bowl at Riverboat Lanes. Fall and winter bowling clubs and leagues are now forming. See details and sign up at RBL.

# Navy Prepares Sailors, Families for Seasonal Flu

## Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (NNS) — With flu season quickly approaching, the Navy's leadership is urging service members, veterans and family members to be aware of the risks of seasonal flu and to receive their scheduled vaccinations.

Influenza or "flu" has the potential to significantly impact Navy force readiness and missions. In the United States, influenza results in more than 25 million reported cases, more than 150,000

hospitalizations due to serious complications and more than 30,000 deaths annually.

According to the Navy Surgeon General Vice Adm. Adam M. Robinson Jr., immunization is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of seasonal influenza. "Influenza is not the common cold," said Robinson. "It can be a severe to life-threatening disease and getting an annual flu vaccine immunization protects us from getting the disease or becoming severely ill. The seasonal flu vaccine not only helps protect vaccinated individuals, but also helps protect entire communities

by preventing and reducing the spread of the disease."

Navy medical officials anticipate the supply of vaccine to Navy medical treatment facilities will arrive by late September and do not anticipate any availability issues like those experienced last fall.

This year's seasonal influenza vaccine contains three inactive virus components based on an estimate of the most prevalent strains for the upcoming season. The 2009 H1N1 pandemic strain is incorporated as one of the three 2010-2011 seasonal influenza vaccine components.

New influenza strains with the potential to become pandemic have not yet been identified for 2010-2011 but the possibility remains that a new virus strain could emerge, become a pandemic and require an additional influenza vaccine. The Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center will closely monitor the emergence of potential new virus strains.

"Let me assure you that the vaccine is safe, effective, and will be widely available beginning next month," said Robinson.

Robinson also states that all personnel and their family members

can limit the effects of the seasonal and H1N1 flu by adopting some basic preventive health practices such as covering their mouth when they cough, washing hands often, and avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

"Following these simple good practices will help us all stay healthy during this flu season," said Robinson.

For more information about Navy Medicine, visit [www.med.navy.mil](http://www.med.navy.mil).

For more news from Navy Medicine, visit [www.navy.mil/local/mednews/](http://www.navy.mil/local/mednews/).

## TIMBERLANE COUNTRY CLUB



Timberlane Drive  
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**Patriots Day**  
**Saturday, September 11th**  
**Starting @ 10:00am**



Timberlane Country Club is proud of our Men & Women serving in our armed forces! We would like to say Thank You by inviting All of our Men & Women in the Armed Forces to come on out and enjoy a little golf on Patriots Day with us!

- ♦ **FREE Golf Clinic with Golf Digest 2009 #1 Teacher in Louisiana, Tim Brown @ 10:00am**
- ♦ **FREE "Recon" Round of Golf with Tee Times starting @ 11:30am- Gather intelligence about us, for FREE**
- ♦ **Check out Timberlane's Patriots Membership**

Please Contact our  
Marketing Manager,  
Michelle Smith at 504-367-5010  
For more information!

## Appointments Recommended for ID cards

The ID card lab at the Customer Service Detachment (CSD) at NAS JRB New Orleans in Belle Chasse now uses the appointment system.

The lab has two computers for IDs. One computer will be dedicated for persons with appointments and one for walk-ins. Wait times for walk-in customers could exceed one hour.

To make an appointment please visit <http://appointments.cac.navy.mil>. The ID lab closes at 4 p.m. each day.

The CSD is the former PSD that was located at NSA New Orleans.

## NEX Hours of Operation

Starting Sept. 1, 2010, the Navy Exchange at NAS JRB New Orleans will have new hours. For more information call 504-678-3510.

Main Store -Building 300  
Monday through Saturday 8 a.m. until 8 p.m.  
Sunday 10:30 a.m. until 5 p.m.

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## CHURCHES

## CHURCHES

## CHURCHES

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For more information,  
call us at 504-394-7877/www.wpcno.org



Pastor  
Rev. John W. Uhl



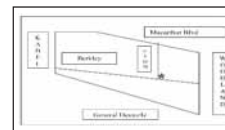
### Aurora United Methodist Church

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www.auroraumc.org • Alethea@auroraumc.nocoxmail.com



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We welcome all individuals and families with  
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Disciple Bible Study, an active Youth Group, Mother's Day Out,  
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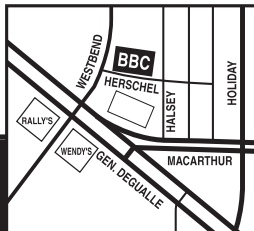
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## CHURCHES

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